DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
US ARMY RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT AND ENGINEERING COMMAND
ARMY RESEARCH OFFICE
P.O. BOX 12211
RESEARCH TRIANGLE PARK NC 27709-2211

February 11, 2015

Ref: Request to DTIC for Distribution Classification Changes

To DTIC Infosec/DB maintenance:

I request that the Army Research Office (ARO) Document Submissions listed below be re-classified as "Distribution Unlimited". The appropriate Program Manager over the agreement (under which all these documents were funded) has reviewed these documents and concurs that there is no proprietary information in any of them that would require a limited distribution. Please date the changes using the first available date that you can perform the change.

55870-LS-MRI.77	203417_201410091343 2014 1010 368
55870-LS-MRI.78	203418_201410091345 2014 1010 369
55870-LS-MRI.80	203420_201410091349 2014 1010 371
55870-LS-MRI.81	203421_201410091352 2014 1010 372
55870-LS-MRI.82	203422_201410091354 2014 1010 373
55870-LS-MRI.84	203424_201410091357 2014 1010 375
55870-LS-MRI.85	203425_201410091359 2014 1010 376
55870-LS-MRI.86	203426_201410091400 2014 1010 377
55870-LS-MRI.87	203427_201410091402 2014 1010 378
55870-LS-MRI.88	203428_201410091403 2014 1010 379
55870-LS-MRI.89	203429_201410091404 2014 1010 380
55870-LS-MRI.90	203432_201410091405 2014 1010 383
55870-LS-MRI.91	203433_201410091406 2014 1010 384
55870-LS-MRI.92	203435_201410091407 2014 1010 386
55870-LS-MRI.93	203436_201410091408 2014 1010 387
55870-LS-MRI.94	203437_201410091408 2014 1010 388
55870-LS-MRI.95	203438_201410091409 2014 1010 389
55870-LS-MRI.96	203439_201410091410 2014 1010 390
55870-LS-MRI.97	203442_201410091411 2014 1010 393
55870-LS-MRI.98	203443_201410101415 2014 1016 039
55870-LS-MRI.99	203445_201410101416 2014 1016 040
55870-LS-MRI.100	203446_201410101417 2014 1016 041
55870-LS-MRI.101	203448_201410101418 2014 1016 042
55870-LS-MRI.102	203449_201410101419 2014 1016 043
55870-LS-MRI.103	203451_201410101421 2014 1016 044

55870-LS-MRI.104	203452_201410101423	2014 1016 045
55870-LS-MRI.105	203453_201410101425	2014 1016 046

This letter will be signed and emailed to:

dtic.belvoir.ecm.list.infosec@mail.mil

Please contact me if you have questions.

RAPPOLD.JACK.KEVIN.10 45379333

J. Kevin Rappold
Chief, Information Management Division
919-549-4300

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

Form Approved OMB NO. 0704-0188

1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YYYY)	2. REPORT TYPE	3. DATES COVERED (From - To)
	New Reprint	-

4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE	5a. CONTRACT NUMBER
Real-Time Analysis of African Political Violence	W911NF-09-1-0077
	5b. GRANT NUMBER
	5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER
	611103

6. AUTHORS	5d. PROJECT NUMBER
Caitriona Dowd, Clionadh Raleigh	
	5e. TASK NUMBER
	5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER

7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAMES AND ADDRESSES	8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER
University of Texas at Austin 101 East 27th Street Suite 5.300 Austin, TX 78712 -1539	

9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)	10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)
U.S. Army Research Office P.O. Box 12211 Research Triangle Park, NC 27709-2211	ARO
	11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)
	55870-LS-MRI.91

12. DISTRIBUTION AVAILIBILITY STATEMENT

Distribution authorized to U.S. Government Agencies Only, Contains Proprietary information

13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

14. ABSTRACT

The December 2012 issue of the Conflict Trends report is the ninth in a series of monthly publications from the Armed Conflict Location & Event Dataset (ACLED). This month is the second in a series of regionally-focused reports, focusing on the East Africa cases of Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, and DR-Congo.

15. SUBJECT TERMS

Africa, conflict, trends, ACLED

16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	15. NUMBER OF PAGES	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT	b. ABSTRACT	c. THIS PAGE			Francis Gavin
UL	UL	UL	UL		19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER
					512-471-6267

Report Title

Real-Time Analysis of African Political Violence

ABSTRACT

The December 2012 issue of the Conflict Trends report is the ninth in a series of monthly publications from the Armed Conflict Location & Event Dataset (ACLED). This month is the second in a series of regionally-focused reports, focusing on the East Africa cases of Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, and DR-Congo.

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE (SF298)
(Continuation Sheet)

Continuation for Block 13

ARO Report Number   55870.91-LS-MRI
Real-Time Analysis of African Political Violence   ...

Block 13: Supplementary Note

Distribution authorized to U.S. Government Agencies Only, Contains Proprietary inf

ACLED
Armed Conflict Location & Event Dataset

This month's *Conflict Trends* report is the ninth in a series of monthly publications from the Armed Conflict Location & Event Dataset (ACLED). Each month, realtime data on conflict events is gathered, analysed and published, and compared with historical and continental patterns in violence levels, locations and agents to provide an insight into conflict change and continuity on the continent.

The October issue (available online at acled-data.com) focused on West African country cases, with a special focus on Boko Haram militancy in Nigeria. This month is the second in a series of regionally focused issues, concentrating on the East African cases of **Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania** and **Uganda**, with some attention paid to recent developments in **DR-Congo (*see* Figure 1)**. A regional focus allows us to turn our attention to countries which may experience lower overall violence rates than high-profile country cases, but whose internal volatility and drivers of conflict are significant both regionally and in discerning broader patterns and processes across Africa.

Upcoming elections in Kenya, transitions of power in Ethiopia, and Uganda's regional role are all considered.
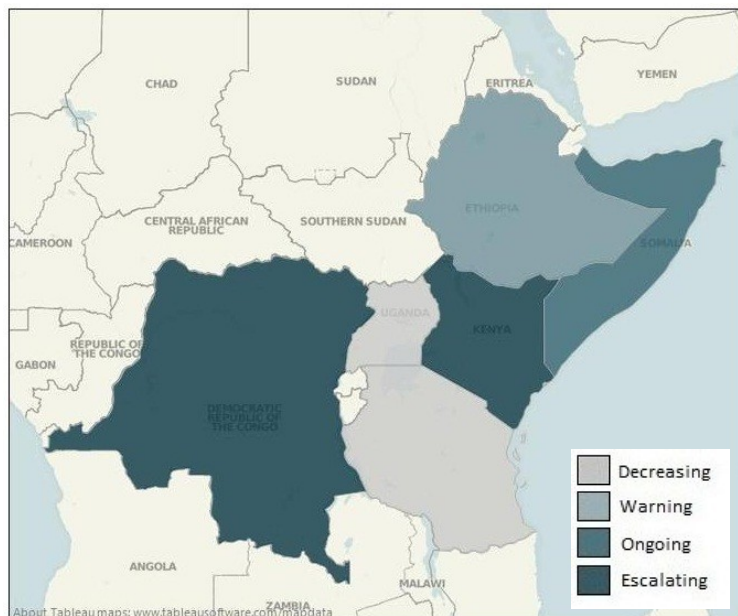
Conflict trajectory, November 2012.

This month's issue also sees a continuation of our a special focus feature, looking at **Al Shabaab** militancy in Kenya and **Somalia**. We look at the historical trajectory of the group and more recent patterns in conflict that may point to future developments and new geographies of violence for the group.
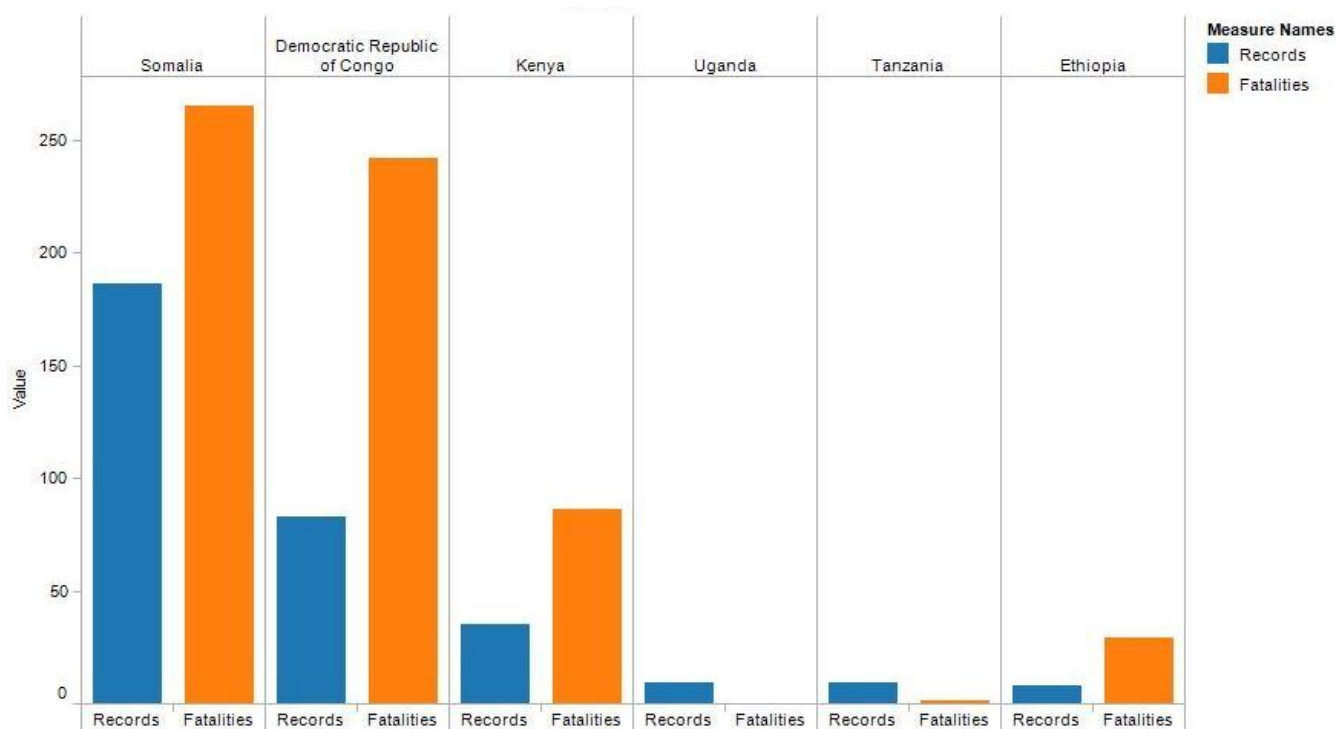
Figure 1: Conflict events and reported fatalities by country, November 2012.
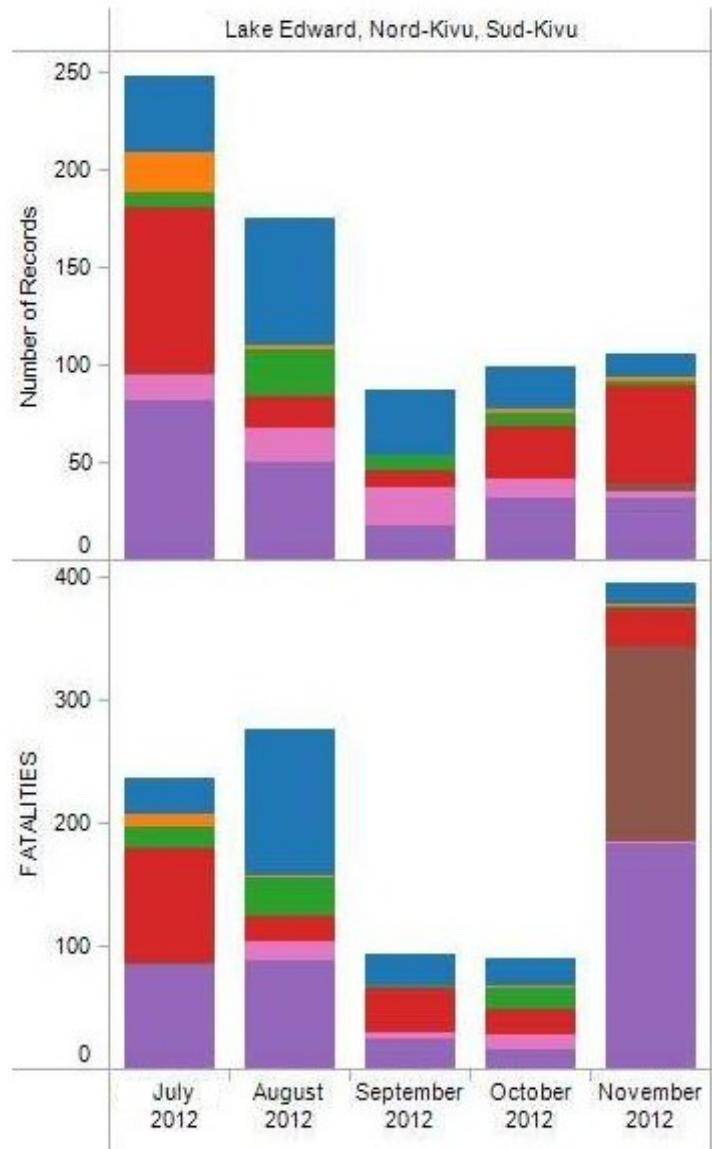
DR-Congo

November was a pivotal month for the Eastern Congo rebellion with the M23 movement taking the Kivu's key regional capital of Goma. The group took Goma and surrounding areas without significant opposition, either from MONUSCO or the Military Forces of Congo; they left largely due to a cessation agreement orchestrated by Uganda's President Museveni. The M23 movement is the latest iteration of a domestic Rwandan force in DR-Congo that previously included the recently disbanded CNDP group.

Although M23 demands significant changes to the distribution of power across the Kivus, one goal close to Rwanda is unimpeded access to DR-Congo territory to root out elements of the FDLR anti-Rwandan militia. While this amounts to a negation of DR-Congo's sovereignty, it has been allowed twice: through the Kimia II campaign in March 2009 and the Amani Leo campaign in January 2010.

So what is pushing on the M23 movement? Not resources, as the movement does not have a foothold or good relations with any resource-rich areas. A hope for political-administrative changes? Perhaps a too-sanguine impression of their motives, as precursors to this movement were involved with vote rigging, human rights abuses, and local Rwandan dominance. Better positions in the Army and local domination for Rwandan-friendly groups?

More likely, but there are many violent actors in the Kivus who will likely fight imposed external dominance. Despite that, as Figure 2 shows, the main actors fighting in Kivu include almost a dozen different Mayi-Mayi groups, military forces from Congo, Rwanda, and other neighbouring states, the M23 movement, several smaller militias and the FDLR. However, the increased rate of Kivu based fatalities in November is largely down to the Rwandan and Congolese militaries.

There are many actors in the Kivus who will likely fight imposed external dominance, including almost a dozen different Mayi-Mayi groups and several smaller militias.

Figure 2: Conflict events and reported fatalities by actor, DR-Congo, Jul - Nov 2012.

Ethiopia

Although November was a quiet month for Ethiopia, it has not gone unnoticed that conflict in many corners continues despite the significant change in national leadership. Haile Mariam Dessalegn became Prime Minister upon the death of Meles Zenawi in August, and has continued inflicting pressure on civil society, suppressing the activities of the countries active rebel groups, Muslims and urban dwellers in growing cities. July was the most violent month in recent times and violence and fatalities have both decreased since. Yet, rioting and protesting continue in Addis Ababa and surrounding cities, mainly from Muslim populations who have been marginalized and repressed by new policies, as the government claims Islamification and radicalization to justify its new approach to religious minorities.

Figure 3: Conflict events by Actor, Ethiopia, Jan - Nov 2012.

Indeed, the violence profile in Ethiopia displays significant change over a short period of time (*see* Figure 3). Communal violence is highest during the rainy season/summer months, when skirmishes, including cattle raiding, are common in the border areas between Ethiopia and Kenya.

Rioting is much less common than protesting, which is increasingly common. However, although pursing an aggressive development policy, Ethiopia remains quite rooted in one-party state domestic politics. The perpetual rebel threats are one consequence of this institutional form: in many other countries in Ethiopia's state of economic and political development, political militias have replaced rebels as principal violence actors, indicating fierce competition and fragmentation of political elites brought about by democracy. However, centralized power and authority, backed by a well-trained and large military, remain the order of the day in Ethiopia.

There are four active rebel groups operating throughout the state, responsible for varying degrees of disruption. The ONLF is responsible for the most fatalities and actions, operating mainly in the Somali region. Promised talks between the government and the ONLF have not come to much; the government continues to try and pacify the Somali state as a way to prevent an increase
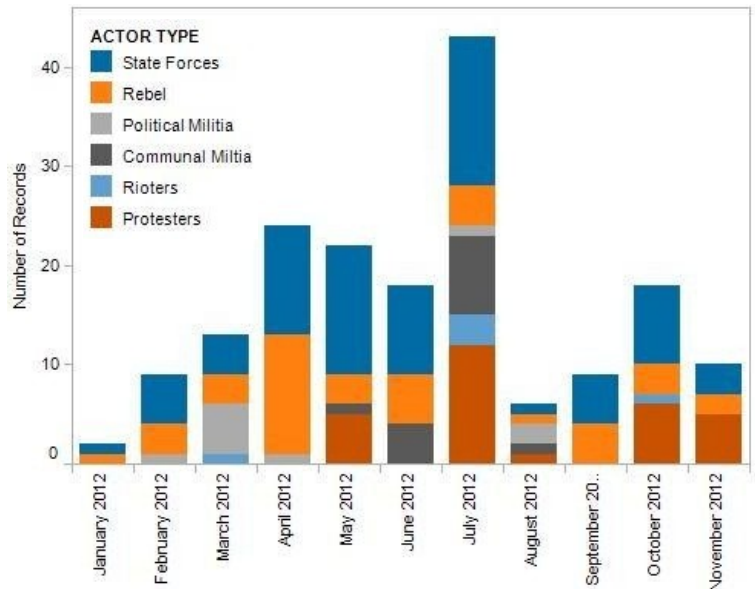
> **The violence profile in Ethiopia displays significant change over a short period of time. Communal violence is highest during the rainy season. Rioting is much less common than protesting, which is increasingly common.**

in ONLF activities and support. The OLF is somewhat notorious for its weakness and splinters, but it has been active across the year in Oromia and attacks on two locations in November resulted in over twenty-eight fatalities. The smaller revolutionary Afar group is less active since the beginning of this year, and is not considered a threat to the regime. However, questions remain over the EUFF: Ethiopia Unity and Freedom Force, an Amhara based group that was last active in October when it caused fourteen fatalities in Tigray. The group's attacks are directed towards the EPDRF regime - it's heavily guarded maximum-security prison, and hospitals; and businesses owned by TPLF members. No statements of intent are recorded for the group: perhaps disgruntled Tigrayans wanting elders to share power?

Overall, Ethiopia's violence is characterized by sharp peaks and lulls, despite a persistent rate of violence against civilians. Yet, it also has a scattered conflict environment, as there as both significant shifts in the number of active groups who conduct activities in different locations over time, and there are few discrete 'hotspots' (*see* Figure 4), despite continued activity in both Addis Ababa and Omoria. Locally, the geography of violence is far more disparate: of the eighty locations that saw violence in the past year, only four has multiple months of violence. Somali bears the brunt of the violence through the highest recorded fatalities, from both the ONLF and the military forces.
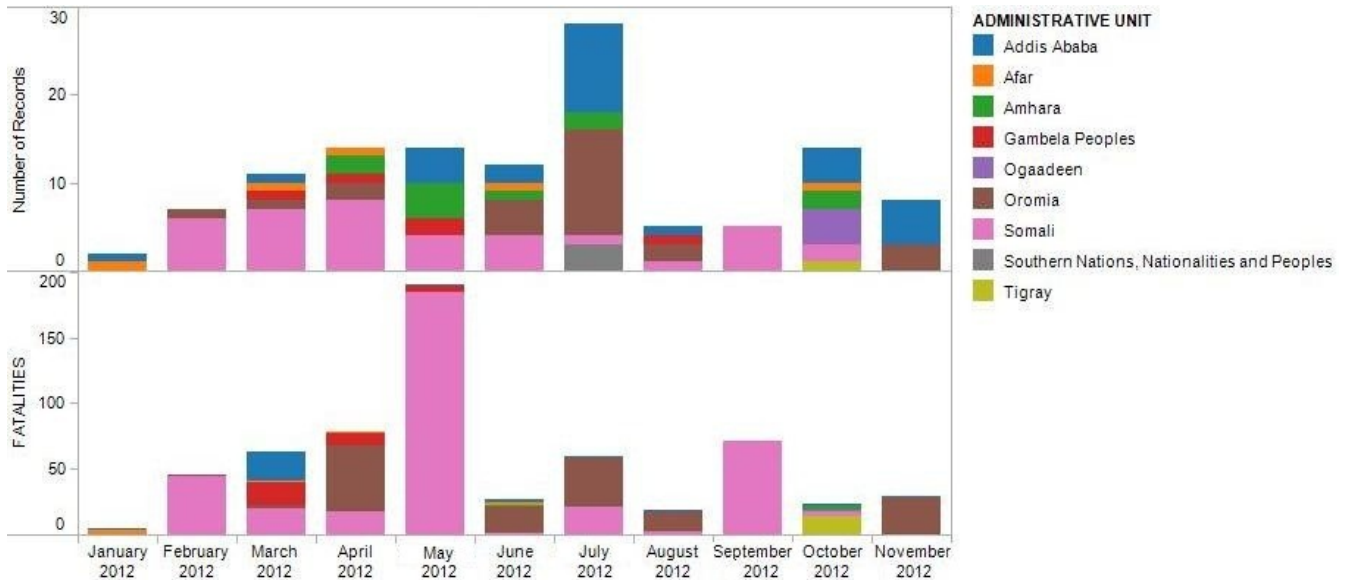
Figure 4: Conflict events and reported fatalities by administrative unit, Ethiopia, Jan - Nov 2012.

Kenya

November saw two separate conflict dynamics in Kenya escalate dramatically: the first involved a highly fatal at tack on police officers pursuing cattle raiders in Samburu, which led to more than 40 deaths; and the second involved mounting tensions in Kenya's Somali communities. Both developments have led to speculation concerning Kenya's upcoming 2013 elections and the prospects for peace. As Figure 5 shows, political violence in Kenya is indeed considerably higher in 2012 than it has been since Kenya's last elections. The nature of this conflict is also significant: violence against civilians in particular is at its highest point since the 2007-2008 electoral violence. While battles and riots/protests have also increased, sharply this year they have not done so as sharply, indicating that unarmed civilians are bearing the brunt of this year's sharp increase in unrest in the country.
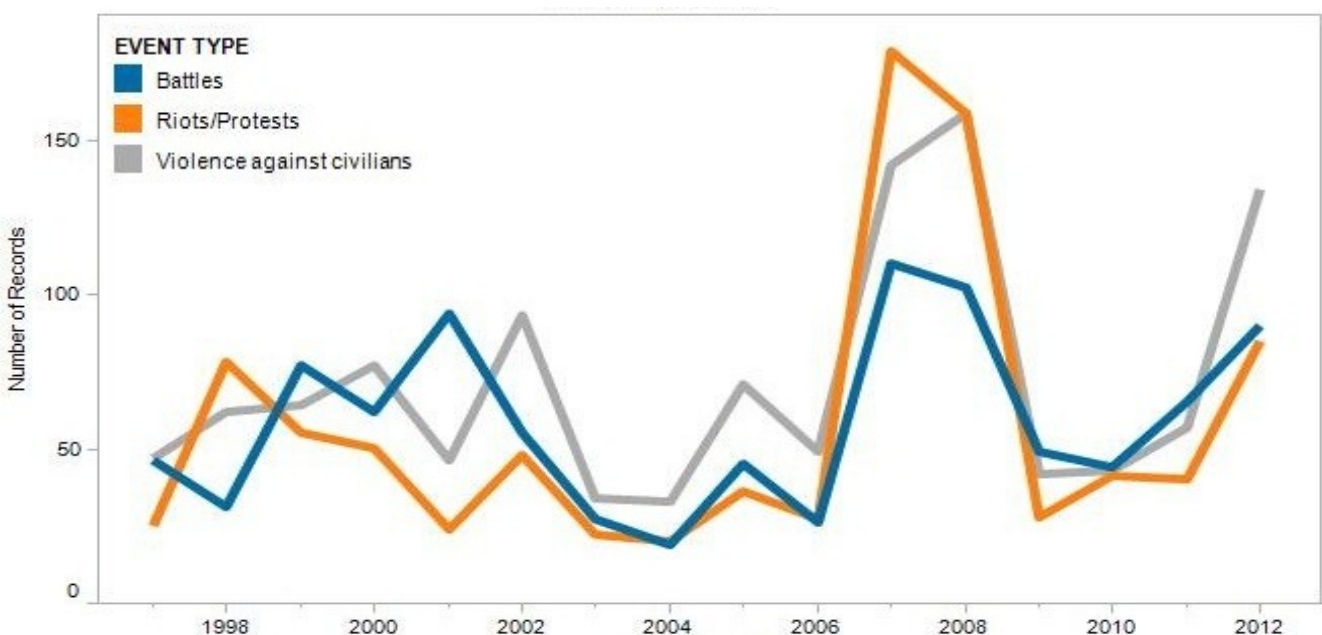

Figure 5: Conflict events by type, Kenya, 1997 - 2012.

In fact, events involving violence against civilians have to date in 2012 constituted a higher proportion of overall violence (at 43%) than they did in 2007 and 2008 (when they constituted 33% and 38% respectively).

There are several other important differences between the violence we are witnessing in Kenya at the present time, and that which occurred at the last round of elections. In the first instance, the identity and nature of the most prominent conflict actors have changed over the past few years. In 2007/2008, three of the top ten most prominent conflict actors were ethnic militia groups, namely those associated with Pokot, Kikuyu and Turkana communities. In 2012, four of the top ten most prominent conflict actors are ethnic militias: namely, those associated with Kalenjin, Luo, Orma and Pokot communities. Further, while the overall levels of violence remain below those experienced during Kenya's previous crisis, the proportional level of communal violence has certainly increased, with attacks by communal militias on civilians almost on par proportionally with those of 2008 (constituting 12.1% in 2012, compared to 12.4% in 2008, and 7.3% in 2007) while both inter-communal militia violence and communal militia conflict with state forces are proportionally higher than in 2007 and 2008.

Other important changes in the country's conflict actor profile include the decline of Mungiki militia activity, after the sect's prominence in the pre- and (to a lesser extent) post-electoral violence of 2007 and 2008. In addition, new actors have emerged as threats to stability in the country, most notably Al Shabaab, whose activities in Kenya and elsewhere are dealt with in this issue's special focus feature.

Another important difference is the locations which are experience violence: Figure 6 charts the proportional changes in administrative regions' experience of violence in Kenya. Most notable is the re-emergence in recent years of the Coast's prominence as a site of conflict following a relative calm since 1997, alongside the increased significance of the North-Eastern area, and the relative decline of conflict experienced in the Rift Valley.

These changing dynamics point to a further important difference in conflict in Kenya in 2012, compared to that experienced in 2007/2008: in previous years, Kenya's conflict patterns were primarily driven by domestic, internal forces. Competition over access to power and resources at the sub-national and national levels has at times been extremely brutal, but the primacy of the domestic actor was almost entirely unchallenged. 2012 has witnessed the very pronounced influence of regional processes - including Kenya's engagement in Somalia - in national conflict, which is linked to, but not wholly encapsulated in, potential threats to national unity emanating from the Coastal region. Combined, these processes indicate how a superficial comparison of the present unrest in Kenya to past experiences is both misleading and wholly inadequate.
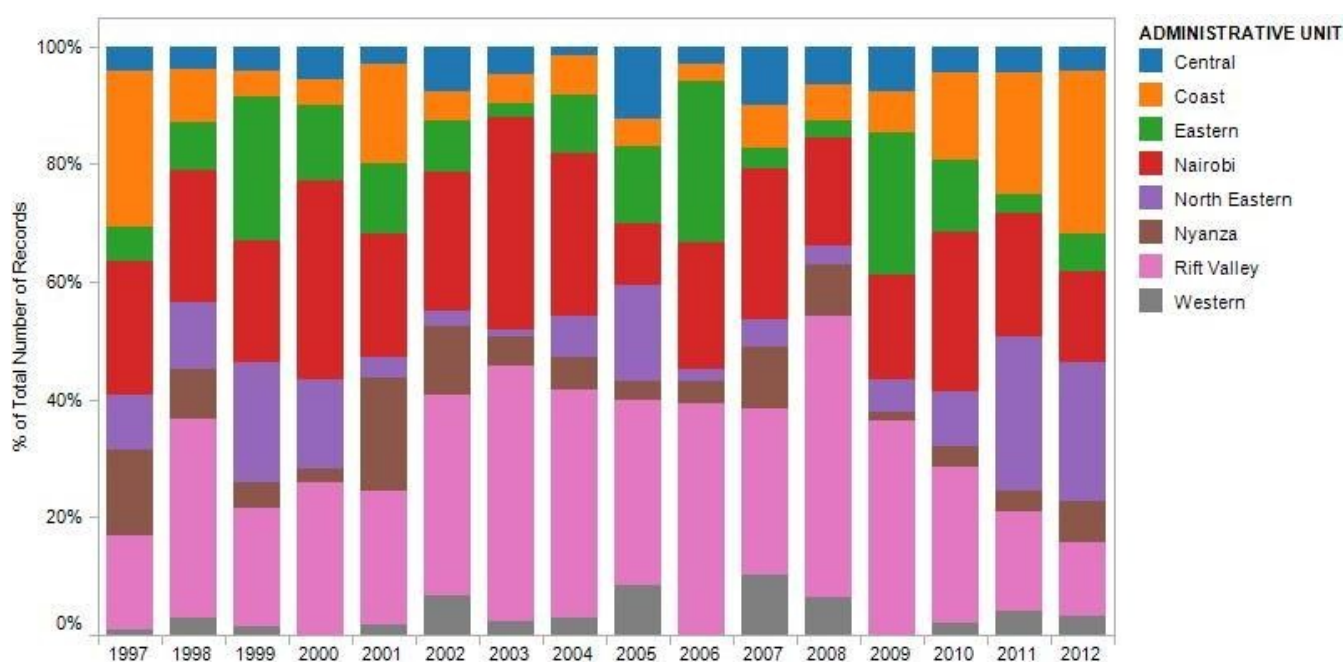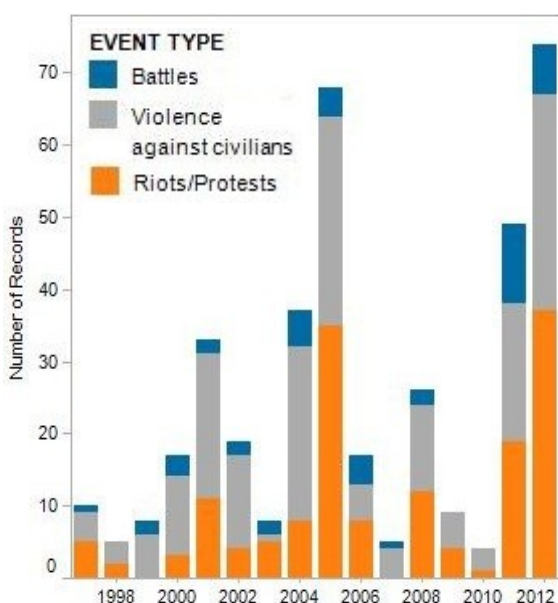

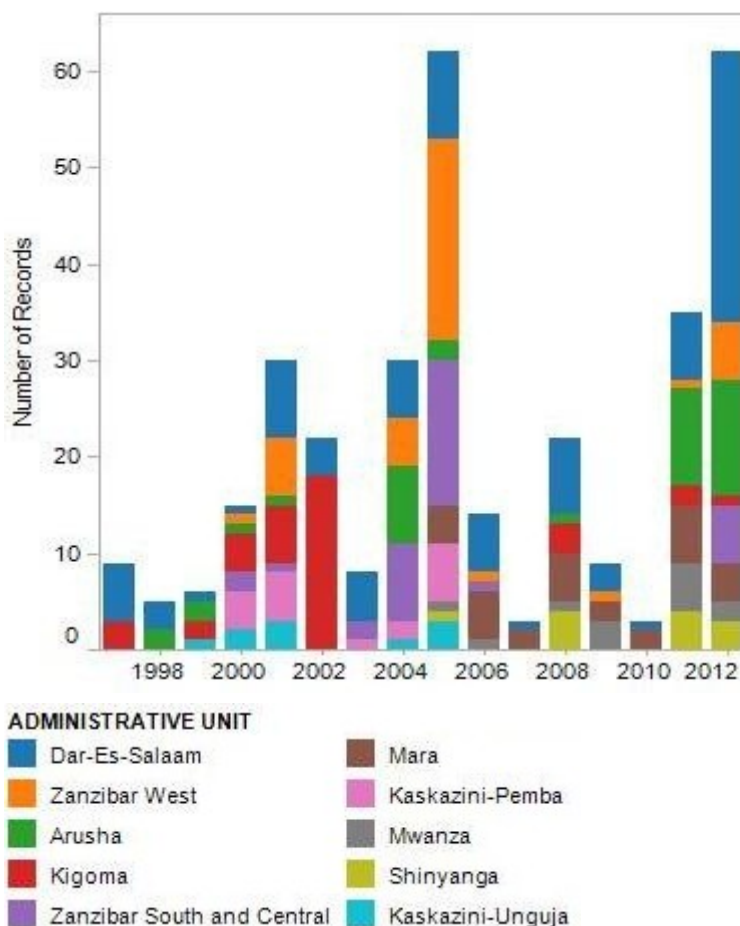**Figure 6: Proportion of conflict events by administrative unit, Kenya, 1997 - 2012.**

Tanzania

Tanzania, to the extent that it is included at all in discussions of African conflict, is normally noted for the relative stability it experiences in a deeply troubled region. This is undoubtedly true: Tanzania experiences markedly fewer conflict events, and almost negligible levels of conflict-associated fatalities, compared to the regional averages. However, it is also true that internal volatility on a country-by-country basis can illuminate processes and patterns at play obscured by more high-profile conflict cases. In this vein, Tanzania has experienced a notable increase in political conflict in 2012, driven almost entirely by an escalation in riots and protests (*see* Figure 7). Reported fatality levels, although generally very low, have also been increasing steadily since 2008, to approximately 20 conflict-associated deaths so far in 2012.

The nature of riots and protests in Tanzania is, as in South Africa, quite diffuse: demonstrations and violent riots have not crystallised around a single issue or political movement. Where commonalities exist between largely disparate events, they are in the general increase in Muslim community and Islamist organisation-affiliated demonstrations and, though far less common, riots, both in Zanzibar and in Dar es Salaam. Such mobilisation

Figure 8: Conflict events by administrative unit, Tanzania, 1997 - 2012.

in Zanzibar is not a new phenomenon, though the noted increase in activity by groups such as The Association for Islamic Mobilisation and Propagation (UAMSHO) in Dar es Salaam is a relatively recent development. A review of the spatial patterns of conflict in Tanzania (*see* Figure 8) highlight the centrality of continued tensions within (and with) Zanzibar to the country's conflict profile. What is interesting about the Tanzanian case is that many of the identities which have served as bases for mobilization and rallying points around which conflict has developed regionally are, in Tanzania, cross-cutting. Economic, social, and communal characteristics which might otherwise serve as a bind for violent groups are often cross-cut by one another. Zanzibar is distinct in that its historical development separate from mainland Tanzania marks it out, as does its religious homogeneity (approximately 95% of the population is Muslim). An estimated one-third of mainland Tanzania's population is also Muslim, although the mainland has not traditionally seen much mobilization around this identity feature.

Figure 7: Conflict events by type, Tanzania, 1997 - 2012.

6

Uganda

Uganda's conflict profile over the recent past suggests that threats to peace are scattered throughout the state, but generally quite low at present.

External affairs continue to occupy President Musenevi, in particular DR-Congo's current rebellion and his position as 'regional peace broker', in addition to Uganda's continued activities in Somalia. Despite Ugandan and Rwandan support of the M23 movement who largely operating with impunity across the Kivus, Uganda closed the Bunagana border post with DR-Congo. The LRA is still operational in DR-Congo (although limited recent events indicate that the campaign against them has been relatively successful). Kenya's looming election, coupled with on-going border skirmishes between Pokot communal groups, suggest that the eastern border may stay busy.

Internally, Uganda faces many challenges that explain continued (and rising) high riot and protest rates (*see* Figure 9). In particular, the massive

> **"An apology is not enough; parliament should stop barking and start biting corruption or it will create another Joseph Kony."**
>
> **- Democratic Party president, Norbert Mao (*Independent*, 20 Nov 2012)**

financial abuse suggested by the Office of the Prime Minister and ministry of Public Service pension corruption scandals has had dire consequences: several development partners including Ireland, Norway, Britain, Denmark and Sweden have cut off all development aid, and the opposition Democratic Party's youth wing - Uganda Young Democrats - are leading the protests against the regime. The Democratic Party's Norbert Mao has stated that the current corruption scandals in the Office of the Prime Minister could re-ignite rebellion in northern Uganda through the creation of another Joseph Kony in northern Uganda.

In addition to corruption, ill-conceived bills on mandatory death sentences of homosexuality are leading other donors to re-think commitments, but Ugandans are largely silent on this. Economic challenges are ongoing, as the shilling has continued to fall relative to the dollar. A new rebel group: the Revolutionary Forces for the Liberation of Uganda (RFLU) are intermittently active, and mainly based in the South-West. This group is believed led by a former member of the FDC opposition party: Forum for Democratic Change and UPDF soldier. There remain concerns about this nascent group joining with or benefitting from the support community of the latent Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) group, also from the area. Regardless of their present limited state, the ongoing conflict in DR-Congo's provides an accessible rear base for development and collaboration.
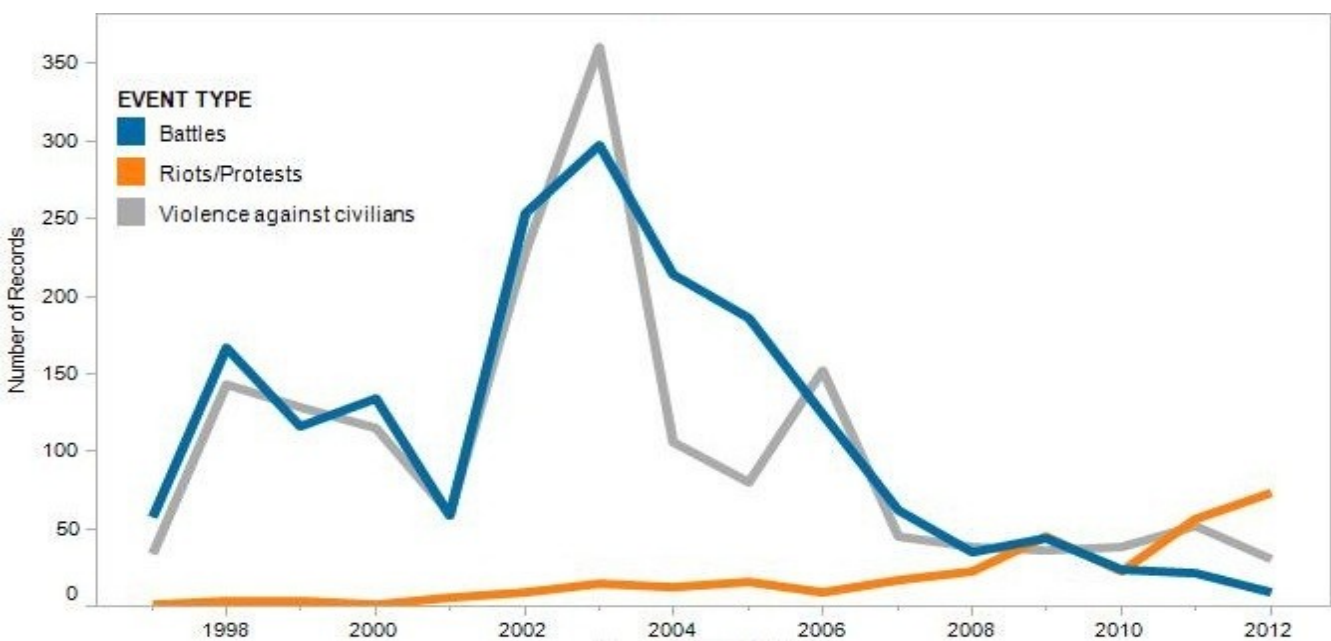

Figure 9: Conflict events by type, Uganda, 1997 - 2012.

Special Focus: Al Shabaab

After a slow start, the recent, seemingly spectacular progress of African Union, Ethiopian and Somali federal government troops in their campaign against Al Shabaab has led many to declare the routing of Al Shabaab a veritable *fait accompli*. While analysts cannot ignore the challenges ahead for the Somali government and its allies in holding, securing and governing the territory they have recently reclaimed, for many the total disintegration of Al Shabaab appears to be only a matter of time. This special feature considers the origins and nature of the infamous group, before turning to observed patterns of conflict, and speculating on what we might expect from the group in the coming months.

Overview:

Al Shabaab was established in Somalia in the early 2000s from the remnants of the militant al Ittihad al Islamiya, but remained largely inactive until 2006, when the Ethiopian invasion of Somalia drove the Islamic Courts Union from Mogadishu. The group has since distinguished itself – even in the infamous category of violent Islamist militant organisations globally – in part through its strategic and at times innovative use of media and propaganda to articulate its message, and in part through the size of the territory it held and governed in Somalia.

The group's stated goal has been the implementation of Sharia law, a goal which has primarily been pursued through opposition to federal government forces and allied parties (Ethiopia, and later Kenya). The intended scope of this action is, as in many Islamist organisations, disputed: the movement is divided between those with a national focus on Somalia, narrowly defined; those with broader, pan-Somali links; and those whose agenda is dogmatically global. Tensions within the group have been particularly pronounced since it (re-)integrated one-time allies-cum-former-rivals, Hizbul Islam, into its ranks following the latter's defeat in late 2010.

2010 and 2011 also witnessed several targeted

hits on Al Shabaab leadership, and heavy losses suffered in the fight to hold Mogadishu, something which it is speculated contributed to the advancement of younger, less experienced and less ideologically coherent members through the ranks to leadership positions. In July 2011, Al Shabaab Emir Ahmed Abdi Godane reported that the group was plagued with corruption, as younger men promoted through the ranks to replace senior commanders were less committed to the 'jihadist lifestyle.' (*AfCon*, 26 August 2011) Comparably deep divisions were evident in March 2012, when Sheikh Hasan Dahir Aweys publicly disagreed with Godane when the latter asserted that Al Shabaab was the only Islamist group fighting pursuing jihad in Somalia. Aweys responded publicy, in a move seen as evidence of the escalating rift in the leadership, 'One cannot limit or make jihad a membership, jihad is open to everyone who is willing to fight.' (quoted in Garowe Online, 1 April 2012).

> **2012 saw Al Shabaab simultaneously reassert its commitment to a global agenda beyond Somalia, and strategically develop connections in new territory within Somalia, both of which have been borne out in recent months.**

In addition to organisational divisions, the group has also evolved over time in response to changing circumstances: following a concentrated assault in 2010 and 2011, in August 2011 Al Shabaab withdrew from Mogadishu, where it had held considerable ground, most notably in the form of Bakara Market.

October of that same year witnessed a high-profile suicide bombing on a TFG compound in Mogadishu, marking Al Shabaab's tactical resort to guerrilla-style warfare, after staging more conventional battles in the capital previously. The incursion of Ethiopian and Kenyan troops into Somalia in late 2011 effectively surrounded the militants as AMISOM, joined by TFG forces, pushed south and inland from Mogadishu. A series of tactical moves followed: on the international scale, Al Shabaab declared its formal allegiance to Al Qaeda in early February; while late February saw national-level developments as the militants integrated the Puntland-based militia of Mohamed Said Atom into the ranks later in the month.

While Al Shabaab has gone on to lose large swathes of territory to government-allied forces – including through the much-anticipated battle for Kismayo in September, which few analysts had anticipated would fall so quickly – the significance of Al Shabaab's tactical re-alignments should not be dismissed. 2012 saw the group simultaneously reassert its commitment to a global agenda beyond Somalia, and strategically develop connections in new territory within Somalia, both of which have been borne out in recent months.

Conflict Profile:

That Al Shabaab activity has been very high in 2012 will come as no

surprise; that it has surpassed the levels it reached in 2010 and 2011, when the group was battling daily for control of Mogadishu is more notable (*see* Figure 10). It is also significant that 2012 is the first year in which we see relatively high levels of violence against civilians by Al Shabaab: while previous years saw sporadic targeted assassinations and attacks on civilians in the vicinity of military establishments, this year witnessed the first systematic and sustained attacks on civilians within Al Shabaab-held areas by Al Shabaab officials. These attacks were primarily associated with incidents of suspected spying by non-combatants for the government or allied military forces.

There are several possible explanations as to why violence against civilians has typically been quite low in areas held by Al Shabaab. The first is that there remain quite high levels of unidentified armed group attacks on civilians in these territories, suggesting that Al Shabaab officials may have been systematically conducting similar attacks, but they have sought to go undetected, or not seen the need to identify themselves with the acts for strategic, support or practical purposes. The second is that Al Shabaab may have been successful in securing compliance by populations under its authority, and had comparatively less need for targeted attacks on civilians as a means of enforcing discipline. This would be in marked contradistinction to government and allied forces in Mogadishu, which at times engaged in indiscriminate attacks on civilian residential areas suspected of sheltering Al Shabaab militants.

To state this is by no means to minimise the brutality of a regime under which many Somalis in Al Shabaab-controlled territory lived, and from which many fled to neighbouring Kenya, Ethiopia and beyond. It is, however, an attempt to understand something of the endurance of such regimes, a component of which in the case of Al Shabaab's precursor, the Islamic Courts Union, was in its ability to provide a modicum of stability and security to populations under its control. While the extent of Al Shabaab's territorial control at the height of its power has much to do with the unique circumstances of the world's most infamous failed state, it is important that the group's rise is not dismissed as only conceivable in such a vacuum. Early commentary on the Somalia situation (*see* BBC, 'Meeting Somalia's Islamist Insurgents,' 28 April 2008), suggested that Al Shabaab would be unlikely to make much headway in Somalia as 'The Islam practiced in Somalia has traditionally been moderate and tolerant [...] There is no history of widespread support for radical religious movements.' An echo of this analysis is found in treatment of the situation in Mali and elsewhere today, where such under-estimation may prove dangerous.

2012 and Beyond:

As late as February 2012 there was still some discussion among international actors as to the possibility of negotiating with Al Shabaab and arriving at a negotiated settlement of types with the group, particularly among Qatar, Turkey and other non-traditional
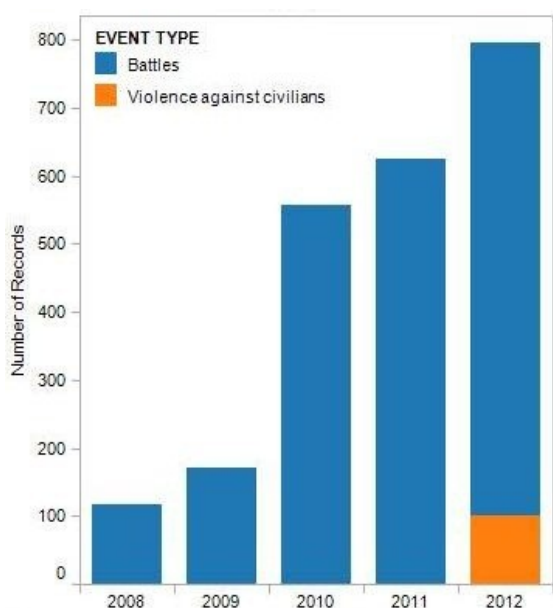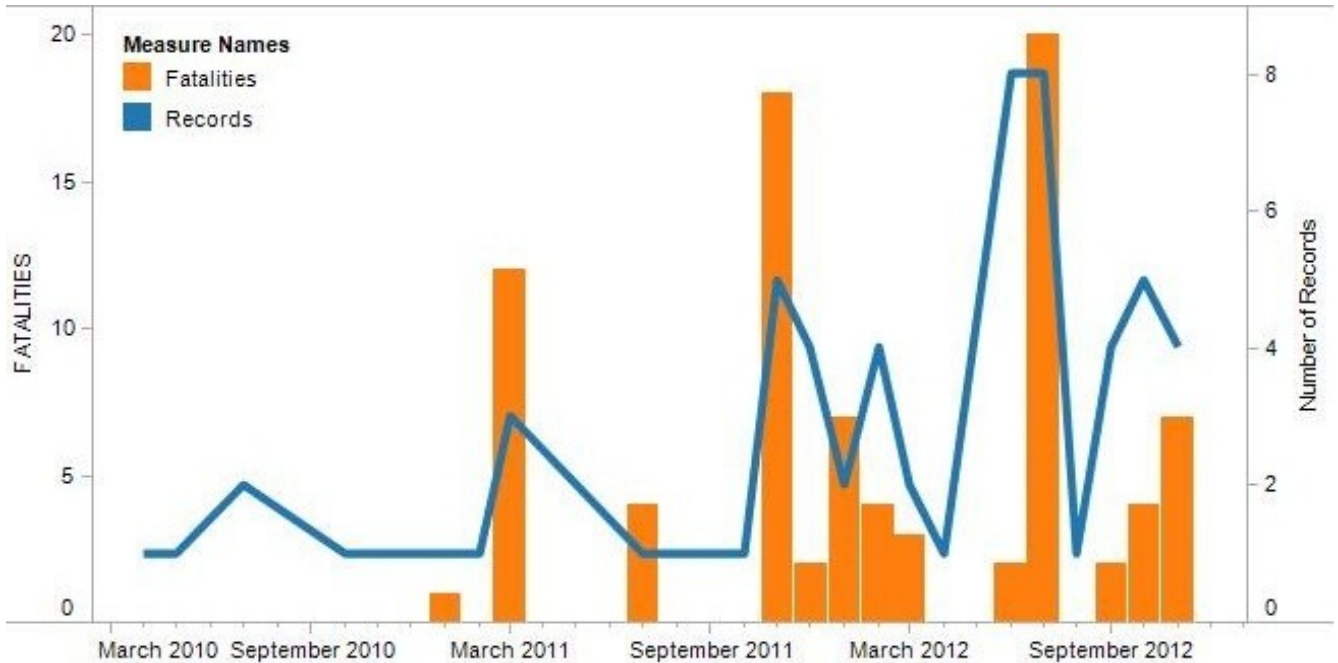

**Figure 10: Al Shabaab activity by type,
all countries, 2008 - 2012.**
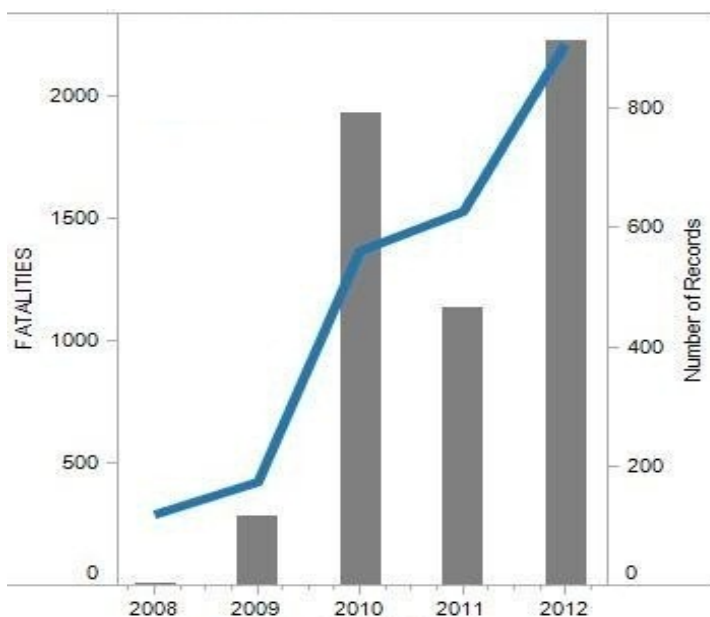
**Figure 11: Al Shabaab events and associated fatalities, all
countries, 2008 - 2012.**

Figure 12: Al Shabaab activity and reported fatalities, North-Eastern Province, Kenya, 2010 - 2012.

donors and stakeholders in the Somali context (*AfCon*, 17 February 2012). Al Shabaab's declaration of allegiance to Al Qaeda was nothing if not the effective scuppering of such a possibility. Many more have since ruled out any engagement with the group on the grounds that Al Shabaab at the time of writing had been routed from Kismayo and Jowhar, had left other administrative hubs such as Baidoa with relatively little resistance, and would appear to be imploding organisationally with the defection of Hizbul Islam and many individual fighters to the government cause.

However, it's worth noting that Al Shabaab has appeared to be on the verge of collapse before – perhaps most notably in 2008 / 2009 as the TFG gained ground in Mogadishu and Ethiopian forces, a presence which provided all the mobilising rhetoric of any perceived occupying force, departed (*AfCon*, 20 February 2009). At the same time that Al Shabaab has suffered heavy losses in South-Central Somalia, it has dramatically increased its activity – and associated fatalities – in Kenya and Puntland, in Somalia's north-east.

In Kenya, conflict has been concentrated in the North-Eastern province (*see* Figure 12), and Nairobi, where it is likely that a combination of formally affiliated combatants and ideologically aligned or informally networked individuals have carried out a range of attacks on state security forces and civilian targets. The Kenyan government's response has been predictable: raids in Somali neighbourhoods in Nairobi have uncovered stores of weapons, but less targeted reprisals against ethnically Somali communities, particularly in the North-East have done little except potentially radicalise an already marginalised population and leave them susceptible to further Al Shabaab expansion.

Somalia's northern regions are generally excluded from discussions on security in-country, but this may change if Al Shabaab continues to develop a presence there. Puntland is generally less stable than its neighbour, Somaliland, and the majority of the conflict it does witness has been either over the disputed boundary between Somaliland and Puntland, or has been markedly clan-based. Al Shabaab could potentially – dramatically – alter this dynamic through the linkages established with west-Bari based militias. Particularly since the group developed its capacity to launch targeted, guerrilla-style hit-and-run assaults, it may find Puntland's comparatively sparsely governed spaces fertile ground for regrouping, recruiting and reasserting itself.

Sources

The information in this issue of ACLED *Conflict Trends* was compiled from a variety of sources, including ACLED data, compiled from news reports; NGO reports, and Africa-focused news reports. Citations refer to African Confidential (*AfCon*); Agence France Presse (*AFP*); Reuters News Service and BBC News. Further information can be found online at www.acleddata.com/data.

10

This issue of ACLED *Conflict Trends* was compiled by Dr. Clionadh Raleigh and Caitriona Dowd of Trinity College Dublin.
Further information and maps, data, trends and publications can be found at **www.acleddata.com** or by contacting **acledinfo@gmail.com**.
Follow ACLED on Twitter for realtime updates, news and analysis: **@ACLEDinfo**